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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/810,766	03/26/2004	Geoffrey R. Kruse	M61.12-0629	9088
27366 7590 04/04/2008 WESTMAN CHAMPLIN (MICROSOFT CORPORATION) SUITE 1400 900 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402-3319				
EXAMINER				
CAO, PHUONG THAO				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2164				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
04/04/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/810,766

Applicant(s)

KRUSE ET AL.

Examiner

Phuong-Thao Cao

Art Unit

2164

Period for Reply
-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 January 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 4-18 and 20-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 4-18 and 20-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/S508)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to Amendment filed on 1/16/2008.
2. Claims 1, 18 and 21 have been amended, and claims 2, 3 and 19 were previously cancelled. Currently, claims 1, 4-18 and 20-23 are pending.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments filed on 1/16/2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding Applicant's argument that Collins does not disclose a report object that is configured to operate without directly accessing a database, Examiner respectfully disagrees. It is true that web server 1 (which can be interpreted as equivalent to report object) directly access database 2. However, based on the reconsideration of the Collins reference and the broad interpretation of the recited "report object", the client system/computer (see Collins, paragraph [0034] and [0039]) which used by the customer to request and report information to the customer could be broadly interpreted as a report object. The client system/computer accessing information from the database indirectly through the Web server including the Differentiator Engine is equivalent to the recited report object which is configured to operate without directly accessing the database.

Regarding Applicant's argument that the amended limitation "the uniform interface is further configured to query the at least one staging table, *without user intervention*" makes the claimed invention distinguished from the reference since the reference discloses the querying function in response to user interaction, Examiner respectfully disagrees.

It is a well settled rule that a reference must be considered not only for what it expressly teaches but also for what it fairly suggests. See *In re Burckel*, 592 F.2d 1175, 201 USPQ 67 (CCPA 1979) and *In re Lamberti*, 545 F.2d 747, 192 USPQ 278 (CCPA 1976) as well as *In re Bode*, 550 F.2d 656, 193 USPQ 12 (CCPA 1977) which indicates such fair suggestions to unpreferred embodiments must be considered even if they were not illustrated. Additionally, it is an equally well settled rule that what a reference can be said to fairly suggest relates to the concepts fairly contained therein, and is not limited by the specific structure chosen to illustrate such concepts. See *In re Bascom*, 230 F.2d 612, 109 USPQ 98 (CCPA 1956).

The teaching of a querying function suggests the invocation of the function based on any kinds of triggers in the system (e.g., with or without user intervention) which are likely choices of implementation. In addition, the claimed language of "user intervention" in the system is ambiguous, for instance, in the web client-server environment, "user intervention" (e.g., click or select some objects) in the client computer becomes a request (i.e., trigger) in the server. In other words, there is no user interventions in the server; functions (e.g., querying function of the Differentiator Engine) implemented in the server are invoked automatically based on triggers (without user intervention).

Claim Objections

4. Claim 1, 8 and 21 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Regarding claims 1 and 21, the claimed “tangible medium” (claim 1, line 1), (claim 21, lines 1 and 6) should be changed to “computer storage medium” which is specifically defined in the Specification (see [page 7, lines 1-10]). Paper is an example to “tangible medium” which is non-statutory subject matter.

Regarding claim 8, language “can be” (claim 8, lines 4) should be changed to “is”.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

6. Claims 1, 4-18 and 20-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the

relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Regarding claim 1, the newly added negative limitation “without user intervention” as recited in “the uniform interface is further configured to query the at least one staging table, without user intervention,...” is not defined/described by the Specification.

Claims 4-17 are rejected as incorporating the deficiencies of rejected claim 1 upon which they depend.

Regarding claims 18 and 21, the newly added limitation “wherein the generalized request is satisfied without multiple instances of user intervention” including a negative limitation “without multiple instances of user intervention” is not defined/described in the Specification.

Claims 20, 22 and 23 are rejected as incorporating the deficiencies of rejected claim 18 and 21 upon which they depend respectively.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

9. Claims 1, 4-18 and 20-22 (effective filing date 3/26/2004) are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Collins (US Publication No 2002/0065744, published on 5/30/2002) in view of Thompson et al. (US Patent No 6,668,253, effective filing date 9/8/1999).

As to claim 1, Collins teaches:

“A computer system that includes components stored on a tangible medium” (see Collins, [0011] and Fig. 1), the components comprising:

“a uniform interface configured to receive a generalized request from a report object and, based upon information included in the generalized request, access data from a database and return the accessed data to the report object, the report object being configured to operate without directly accessing the database” (see Collins, [0034], [0039] and Fig. 1 wherein the Web server

combined with the Differentiator Engine is interpreted as Applicant's "uniform interface", Web client presenting web page to report information with respect to user's request is interpreted as Applicant's "report object", and a user request sent from the Web client (used by customer) to the Web server and including customer-selected product ID and its parameters is interpreted as Applicant's "generalized request", and the Web client accesses information from database through the Web server),

"wherein at least one staging table, having a standardized structure which is independent of a structure of the database, is utilized by the uniform interface to store at least a portion of the accessed data" (see Collins, [0039] for temporary table which is interpreted as Applicant's "staging table"),

"wherein the uniform interface is further configured to access the data from the database by translating the generalized request into a specific query which, upon execution, populates the at least one staging table with the accessed data" (see Collins, [column 39] and Fig 2 for querying database based on parameters provided by user request), and

"wherein the uniform interface is further configured to query the at least one staging table, without user intervention, to retrieve the accessed data and to return the accessed data to the report object after execution of the specific query that populates the at least one staging table" (see Collins, [0040] and Fig. 3 wherein there is no user intervention on the Web server, a user intervention on the Web client is transformed to a message (trigger) on the Web server and the trigger activates the Differentiator Engine to query temporary table).

However, Collins does not teach the database as a general ledger database.

On the other hand, Thompson et al. teach a general ledger database (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 29-33]).

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the system of Collins by the teaching of Thompson et al. by modifying the system of Collins to use with the general ledger database. Skilled artisan would have been motivated to do so as suggested by Collins, [0038] to provide user with automated service providing information (i.e., reporting) driven by their interests. Accessing and reporting data from a general ledger database using the modified system of Collins would be more effective in terms of reporting driven by user's interests.

As to claim 4, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the at least one staging table is an account code table” (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 44-47] for Account Tables).

As to claim 5, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein at least one staging table is an account balance staging table” (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 60-65] for Financial Account Balance Table).

As to claim 6, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the at least one staging table is a column filter staging table” (see Thompson et al., [column 11, lines 9-12] for a list of predefined query filters which is equivalent to Applicant’s “column filter staging table”).

As to claim 7, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the generalized request includes at least one natural account is translated into at least one account code, which is stored in an account balance staging table” (see Thompson et al., Fig. 25A for account sequence which is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code”).

As to claim 8, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 7 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the specific query, into which the generalized request is translated by the uniform interface, comprises a single sequential query language (SQL) statement that joins the account staging table with a balance table of the general ledger database, such that balance information for an entire report column can be retrieved by execution of the single SQL statement” (see Thompson et al., [column 31, lines 35-60]).

As to claim 9, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 8 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the balance information comprises current balance amounts for each account code in the account staging table” (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 60-65] wherein each of GL accounts is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code” and account balances is equivalent to Applicant’s “balance amounts”, and Fig. 25C for balance amount item).

As to claim 10, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 8 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the balance information comprises year-to-date balance amounts for each account code in the account staging table” (see Thompson et al., [column 30-35 and 60-65] wherein each of GL accounts is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code” and account balances is equivalent to Applicant’s “balance amounts”, and Fig. 25C for EOY beginning balance and EOY ending balance which is equivalent to Applicant’s “year-to-date balance”).

As to claim 11, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 8 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the generalized request further comprises account filter criteria, and wherein a WHERE clause of the single SQL statement is configured to include the account filter criteria” (see Thompson et al., [column 10, lines 1-15 and 40-45] and [column 26, lines 30-40] for the function of filtering information including financial information).

As to claim 12, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the generalized request includes at least one natural account and account filter criteria, and wherein, with the help of the uniform interface, the at least one natural account is translated into at least one account code, which is stored in an account balance staging table, and wherein account codes that match the account filter criteria are stored in a column filter staging table” (see Thompson et al., Fig. 25A for account sequence which is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code”, and see [column 11, lines 9-15] and [column 10, lines 1-15] for filtering information and see [column 25, lines 20-60] and Fig. 25A for account number which is equivalent to Applicant’s “natural account” and account sequence which is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code”).

As to claim 13, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 12 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the specific query, into which the generalized request is translated by the uniform interface, comprises a single sequential query language (SQL) statement that joins the account staging table with the column filter staging table and with a balance table of the general ledger database, such that balance information for an entire report column can be retrieved by execution of the single SQL statement” (see Thompson et al., [column 26, lines 30-45] and [column 31, lines 35-45] for ability to combine the financial information which is equivalent to Applicant’s “joins”).

As to claim 14, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 13 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the balance information comprises current balance amounts for each account code in the account staging table” (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 30-35 and 60-65] wherein each of GL accounts is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code” and account balances is equivalent to Applicant’s “balance amounts”, and Fig. 25C for balance amount item).

As to claim 15, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 13 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the balance information comprises year-to-date balance amounts for each account code in the account staging table” (see Thompson et al., [column 30-35 and 60-65] wherein each of GL accounts is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code” and account balances

is equivalent to Applicant's "balance amounts", and Fig. 25C for EOY beginning balance and EOY ending balance which is equivalent to Applicant's "year-to-date balance").

As to claim 16, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

"wherein the at least one staging table is a temporary table" (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 15-17] wherein a Summary Temporary Table is a temporary staging table).

As to claim 17, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

"wherein the at least one staging table is a permanent table" (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 17-22] wherein a Summary (permanent) Table is a permanent staging table).

As to claim 18, Collins teach:

"A computer implemented method of retrieving data, from a database, to satisfy a generalized request from a report object" (see Collins, Collins, [0034], [0039] and Fig. 1 wherein the Web server combined with the Differentiator Engine is interpreted as Applicant's "uniform interface", Web client presenting web page to report information with respect to user's request is interpreted as Applicant's "report object", and a user request sent from the Web client (used by customer) to the Web server and including customer-selected product ID and its parameters is

interpreted as Applicant's "generalized request", and the Web client accesses information from database through the Web server), comprising:

"receiving the generalized request from the report object" (see Collins, [0039] and Fig. 2 wherein the Differentiator Engine receives a generalized request from Web server);

"accessing, based on information included in the generalized request, data from the database" (see Collins, [0039]),

"utilizing at least one staging table, having a standardized structure which is independent of a structure of the database, to store at least a portion of the accessed data on a tangible medium before it is returned to the report object from the staging table" (see Collins, [0039] wherein temporary table is interpreted as staging table),

"wherein the report object is configured to operate without directly accessing the database" (see Collins, [0034] and Fig. 1 wherein the web client (used by the customer) accesses information from the database through the Web server), and

"wherein the generalized request is satisfied without multiple instances of user intervention" (see Collins, [0039] for displaying the page to customer after the customer selects a product).

However, Collins does not teach the database as a general ledger database.

On the other hand, Thompson et al. teach a general ledger database (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 29-33]).

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the system of Collins by the teaching of Thompson et al. by modifying the system of Collins to use with the general ledger database. Skilled artisan

would have been motivated to do so as suggested by Collins, [0038] to provide user with automated service providing information (i.e., reporting) driven by their interests. Accessing and reporting data from a general ledger database using the modified system of Collins would be more effective in terms of reporting driven by user's interests.

As to claim 20, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 18 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

"wherein the at least one staging table is a temporary table" (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 15-17] wherein a Summary Temporary Table is a temporary staging table).

As to claim 21, Collins teaches:

"A computer system that includes components stored on a tangible medium" (see Collins, [0011] and Fig. 1), the components comprising:

"a uniform interface configured to receive a generalized request from a report object and, based upon information included in the generalized request, access data from at least one staging table that stores information from a single database on a tangible medium" (see Collins, Collins, [0034], [0039] and Fig. 1 wherein the Web server combined with the Differentiator Engine is interpreted as Applicant's "uniform interface", Web client presenting web page to report information with respect to user's request is interpreted as Applicant's "report object", and a user request sent from the Web client (used by customer) to the Web server and including customer-selected product ID and its parameters is interpreted as Applicant's "generalized request", and

the Web client accesses information from database through the Web server and the Differentiator Engine),

“wherein at least one staging table has a standardized structure which is independent of a structure of the database” (see Collins, [0039] for temporary table which is interpreted as Applicant’s “staging table”), and

“wherein the report object is configured to operate without directly accessing the database” (see Collins, [0034] and Fig. 1 wherein the web client (used by the customer) accesses information from the database through the Web server), and

“wherein the generalized request is satisfied without multiple instances of user intervention” (see Collins, [0039] for displaying the page to customer after the customer selects a product).

However, Collins does not teach the database as a general ledger database.

On the other hand, Thompson et al. teach a general ledger database (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 29-33]).

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the system of Collins by the teaching of Thompson et al. by modifying the system of Collins to use with the general ledger database. Skilled artisan would have been motivated to do so as suggested by Collins, [0038] to provide user with automated service providing information (i.e., reporting) driven by their interests. Accessing and reporting data from a general ledger database using the modified system of Collins would be more effective in terms of reporting driven by user’s interests.

As to claim 22, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 21 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the at least one staging table is a permanent staging table” (see Thompson et al., [column 25, lines 17-22] wherein a Summary (permanent) Table is a permanent staging table).

10. Claim 23 (effective filing date 3/26/2004) is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Collins (US Publication No 2002/0065744, published on 5/30/2002) in view of Thompson et al. (US Patent No 6,668,253, effective filing date 9/8/1999), and further in view of Bakuya et al. (US Patent No 5,680,614 issued on 10/21/1997).

As to claim 23, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 22 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Collins and Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the permanent staging table is updated by one of SQL statements and database functions” (see Thompson et al., [column 31, lines 30-30] for accessing data (e.g., update) using SQL).

However, Collins and Thompson et al. do not teach updating the permanent table is activated each time the general ledger database is updated.

On the other hand, Bakuya et al. teaches using trigger to update a table, which is activated when some trigger condition happens (e.g., another table is update) (see Bakuya et al., [column 9, lines 50-55]).

It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teaching of Bakuya et al. into the system of Colins and Thompson et al. Skilled artisan would have been motivated to do so to provide an effective way to update in the permanent table in accordance with the update of the General Ledger database, as a result, effectively improve the management of valid data in the permanent table.

Conclusion

11. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Phuong-Thao Cao** whose telephone number is (571)272-2735. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM (Mon - Fri).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles Rones can be reached on (571) 272-4085. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2164

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Phuong-Thao Cao
Art Unit 2164
March 24, 2008

/Charles Rones/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2164